THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

EDITED BY
PHILIP MAIRET AND ALEC VIDLER

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OF RELIGION

JANUARY 1950
Vol. I No. 1

ONE WORLD
MANY CULTURES
ONE CHURCH

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HUMAN RIGHTS

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GOETHE
The Bicentenary Reviewed

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A NOTE ON A.D. 1950

WHEN the prospectus of *The Frontier* was printed, announcing the date of this first number as the mid-point of the century, we did not expect to escape correction. We have since been instructed by a number of our friends, as well as by special articles in *The Times* and elsewhere, that the twentieth century began on the last and not the first day of 1900. The Christian Era did not begin with a "zero" year, if only because the number nought is an arithmetical conception that had not then been invented. No doubt the scholars are right: centuries, unlike persons, are born aged one, and do not have to live a year before there is one candle on their birthday cake. The difficulty of conforming to learned opinion in this is one of sheer human frailty. It was the midnight between 1899 and 1900 which *felt* like the critical one, when the churches held their especially impressive "watch-night services"; and few could summon up the same sense of crisis again after they had been writing nineteens instead of eighteens on their letters for a twelvemonth. The same mistake will be made, no doubt, every fifty years, followed by the same instructive corrections and fireside controversies as *The Frontier's* prospectus has provoked.

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Notes of the Month

AS we enter upon the second half of the century, it is instructive to remember how different were the expectations and the aspirations of Europeans when the century began. We can at least be sure that the troubles before us will be different, if not lighter, than those from which we have so imperfectly emerged. One of these contrasts is seen in the attitude towards the autonomy and sovereignty of nations which has important consequences also for both liberty and unity in religion. Fifty years ago, when Europeans felt themselves secure in the leadership of the world they still ascribed their internal troubles to lack of separate national liberties as much as to their economic inequalities. The rise of national autonomies, which had long supplanted the uniform pattern of feudalism, had been accompanied by such startling progress in population, prosperity and power that it was natural to believe that if only Europe could have more of such a manifestly good thing many or most of its discontents would disappear. Certainly almost every claim for sovereign political status put forward by nationalist movements commanded the support of most liberal opinion, and the gratification of national aspirations was the ruling motive of the peace that was to follow on the war of 1914. This little continent of Europe consisted of sixteen sovereign states three-quarters of a century ago, now

it is divided into twenty-five. But when the late war ended there was no disposition to carve still more independencies out of the ruins. The economic interdependence which had always been inhibited by political divisions, and the rise of the great Eurasian and American power to the East and West present over-powering arguments against any further gratification of separatist ambitions. Not only in Europe but elsewhere the tendency is for nations to seek combination in federal groups, both for economic co-operation and military defence.

Until 1900 emigrants were still travelling across the Atlantic in vast numbers, mostly in British ships, which often carried a deadweight of railway metals or heavy industrial equipment, for the U.S.A. was still considerably dependent upon European—mainly British—products: now it is virtually closed to immigrants and independent of imports; it is Europe that is economically dependent. Russia was regarded as a vast but weak power, was about to be defeated by the Japanese, but was expected, sooner or later, to have the benefits of a liberal and humanistic revolution; no one foresaw the combination of Russian messianism and proletarian idealism which was to overshadow the European nations, nor the wars which were to impoverish and weaken them. It is in simple self-defence that schemes for alliance, federation and union are being promoted in Western countries with great moral fervour and effective Christian support. The unification of Europe, with all its vast potential resources in other continents, is a project that the Americans might well have regarded with some jealousy. That they have, on the contrary, greeted it with increasing approval and assistance is largely due to the initiative and persuasion of Christian individuals or groups among them. In Britain also, and on the Continent, it is probably true to say that much, if not most, of the popular support for Western Union has been fostered by the Churches or in political groups with Christian motives. Support from this quarter is of course copiously misrepresented by opponents of the

political aim, and it is important that it should be rightly understood by its friends. The movement towards a Western Union was begun by statesmen for strictly political reasons, but it also happens to be clearly in the defensive interests of the Christian cause throughout the world. All religious institutions are involved, to a greater or less degree, in the political structure with which they have grown up: they are interested in its conservation and its orderly development. In this practical sense, it is often difficult to separate the spiritual from the temporal prospects of Christians in their corporate life; but especially so in this case, since all their institutions are directly attacked by the world-revolution which the political union is designed to hold at bay.

There is, however, another side to the participation of Christians in this defensive effort, which can be of deeper meaning and have more enduring results. The sense of their common peril has drawn the Christian communities together: it has set up such a stir of ecumenical activity between them as Christendom has not known since they were separated, in the age when the great national monarchies arose. And this, like the efforts to re-unite the nations, preceded the recent world war. The World Council of Churches, which came to birth a year ago in the most comprehensive conference ever held between the non-Roman Churches, had a long labour of costly inter-communication behind it, by no means primarily defensive in aim. The co-operation of Christians for many purposes during the war and their need for mutual assistance after it deepened their sense of interdependence and brought about more movement between them than at any time since modern means of travel and communication made it possible. The efforts to establish organs of social co-operation between Roman Catholic and other Christians have been apparently less productive, but here also we have seen a great difference in the tone of interchange. The recent correspondence in

The Times upon "Catholicism To-day" would not have been conducted in such a spirit of conciliation as on the whole it was, at any time before the war; and at the beginning of the century *The Times* could certainly not have printed it at all. These may be small mercies for us to count, in contrast with the political oppression of Christian institutions in many parts of eastern Europe, but they are signs of a development in the self-consciousness of the Western Churches. There is more in it than the compulsion of a common danger: it is the response of the spirit to what challenges it that is significant, and can even turn evil into the occasion of good.

For nations, as for smaller groups, to "get together" is not always and necessarily a good thing. If Western Union —to which so many Governments have already committed themselves in principle—were hastened into being by the wave of popular enthusiasm that Mr. Churchill called for ("almost a hurricane of public opinion") it could certainly produce a new world-power, but not necessarily a happy or benevolent one. Whether it would, as he said, "build up the life of Europe and thus make it possible to rebuild the life of the world for centuries to come" would depend upon the real character and motive of the amalgamation. There is no such inevitable beneficence in Europe and her civilization, that she is constrained by her nature "to spread light as once she did". As the speaker of these words added (they are quoted from Professor Tawney's recent Burge lecture) "She has in fact spread darkness, and her maladies, political and economic, have carried the infection into regions so remote that they might reasonably have expected to enjoy immunity from them". Europe's achievements need no emphasizing: they have enabled the human race as a whole to attain such common self-consciousness as it has; but they have had their destructive side; there is also a world case against Europe. The forces of intellectual arrogance, political unscrupulousness and downright commercial greed, which found powerful instruments of expression during the techno-

logical supremacy of the separate European Powers, are by no means sure to be extirpated by their union. A collective Europe might be as great a danger to herself and the world as ever she was in her divided state. This does not mean that her union is not desirable, but if it is to be beneficial there are conditions to be fulfilled; the reintegration must be also a reformation.

Such a collective reformation implies immense difficulties many of them quite unforseeable. Already Western Europe has been given a political Assembly, authorized to discuss its common affairs, but the American-sponsored Organization for Economic Co-operation is far more practically influential. It can apply financial stimulus to certain industries, and encourage certain interchanges of trade but not others, measures which must sensibly modify the pattern of the whole Continent's economy. This, and the organization of collective defence are intended to produce a material frame within which the societies of Europe can grow into closer relations. The growth must however be slow, for these central organs of government cannot carry out designs which the national governments are indisposed to further. For example, a common military policy for defence cannot proceed very far without raising such questions as the length of personal military service which is a much heavier burden in some countries than in others. Nor could complete freedom of trade and movement of labour between the countries be established without regard to the rates of pay and hours of work which vary widely in Europe, British workers being much more fortunate in both respects than their Continental brethren; and democratic governments could not go far towards adjusting discrepancies of this kind in advance of their constituents' opinions.

Above the levels of industry and defence, however, there are activities in which common action can be pursued with less difficulty. One of these is the reformation of human rights. The recent attempt by UNESCO to draw up a

Declaration of Human Rights was undertaken for the United Nations and has been discussed with representatives drawn from every continent: but in a Western or any other regional union of peoples problems will be sure to arise which cannot be solved without a common conception of the rights of the human being. This is a matter in which Christians hold more than a watching brief, and we have welcomed a special article upon it which will be found upon a later page. Equally important, though hitherto less publicized, is the need for intellectual communication, which was a principal theme of Mr. Birley's recent Reith Lectures on "Britain in Europe". Mr Birley rightly emphasized the need for a much closer co-operation between the European Universities, a renewal and extension of the freedom of movement and mutual hospitality which were among their oldest and most honourable traditions.

There is no historical precedent for federation between sovereign states of such size and complexity as these of Europe. Lesser unions have been brought about under compulsion, or menace from without, but the fact that distinguished elder statesmen support the present effort on the ground of necessity is no guarantee of its success. Christian thinkers as such have no special insight that would enable them to say that such a project should or can be achieved, but they are in a position to say something of how this, or any society must be ordered if it is to endure. They ought, in their capacity as citizens, to help it to succeed if they believe it will make the lives of the peoples concerned less hard and baffling, or that it will save them from something worse. If even then, they advocate it with a certain reserve, it is because they recognize the great danger of those political ambitions which lead men readily into ruthlessness. When a political aim is idealized and magnified into a good in itself, its exponents are tempted to condone almost any means to attain it, and easily feel justified in forcing issues. We know from history that religious communities, too, find

it very hard to surrender their autonomies and unite their leaderships, even where there are strong reasons for joining with others whose manners, customs and doctrines are but slightly different: and the merging of great material and political interests is almost certain to create occasions for much more dangerous discord. One should be all the more cautious of confusing the cause of Europe with the cause of Christianity, if one believes in Western Union as a political plan.

Nor can the politics of the Altantic Treaty be reckoned as defensive of the Faith, or Eastern Europe as its main frontier. Whatever limitations are laid upon religious life on the other side of the " iron curtain ", and however seriously the Soviet State may intend to abolish religion and supplant it by a technological idealism, one of the few things we do know about Russian life is that public worship by densely thronged congregations still thrives in that country after thirty years of communist rule.

The frontier of the Christian religion, in the sense in which the term has geographical meaning, lies right on the other side of the world. It is in Asia, where the tide of communism has overflowed most of China, and the Western nations have now surrendered most of their political authority, that Christianity is chiefly limited to missionary outposts increasingly difficult to supply from the Western world. Left to their native leadership, they are endangered not only by the imperialism of the Kremlin, but by new local nationalisms and the surrounding Oriental religions, a climate of opinion highly unfavourable to their growth. In some places infant churches are almost being turned out to earn their own livings before they are weaned. Unlikely as it is, on a long view, that the Far Eastern countries will be able to do without increasing economic support from America and the Commonwealth for a long while to come, few of the Asian missions will again receive so much direct aid from their mother churches. The steady expulsion of

American missions from China, their largest field of operation, and the decline of Europe in economic strength and colonial power, have faced the whole missionary enterprise in Asia with what the New York *Christianity and Crisis* describes as the necessity of " a thorough reconsideration of policies and a drastic re-orientation of effort ". Flourishing churches indeed remain, in India and elsewhere, and some seeds sown afar, in places now becoming inaccessible, will continue to grow ; but in the last decade the prospect has been entirely transformed. It is possible that the Christian penetration of the multitudinous Orient will have to be renewed by methods we never thought of inventing whilst missionary work could advance under cover of a friendly political and commercial imperialism.

Such is the position of the Faith in a world alien to it, in whose tragedies and conflicts it is nevertheless involved. At present its continued existence in Asia and its future in the West seem to depend upon the issue of a world-struggle between the " white " and " red " internationals to attain predominance. And yet, relying, as both of these imperial movements do, upon nineteenth-century theories about society, neither is as strong as it appears. As Dr. V. A. Demant said in his celebrated series of broadcasts on the future of civilization.[1]

> One thing strikes me as I review the past. It is that periods of renewal have never come through the victory of one of the programmes in the previous period—a victory at the expense of the opposite programme. Those epochs of renewal have rather shifted the whole human problem on to a different plane which the rival schools of the older period had hardly any inkling of . . . an entirely new set of presuppositions have come into play.

In this sense at least may history repeat its lesson, and the latter half of the century loosen the deadlock of the former half.

[1] Now published by the Dacre Press under the title *What is Happening to Us?* 2s. 6d.

ONE WORLD, MANY CULTURES, ONE CHURCH

THIS article is written in the belief, which events may easily falsify, that the present tension between east and west will go on for a long time without any general military engagement on all fronts. The kind of war that we have seen in Palestine and Indonesia, sporadic outbursts of fighting followed by long uneasy truces, seems to me inevitable in the present condition of industrial civilization, where neither of the great adversaries can hope to destroy its enemy without grave risk of self-destruction.

While the cold war goes on, perhaps with intervals of heat, both sides will have to organize their spheres of influence into more or less closely knit political and economic systems. But both will be obliged to admit into these very large units a greater measure of cultural diversity than has ever before been present in one political system. The weak point in the Soviet system seems to have become its inability to recognize any real autonomy in cultural groups; whether those groups be professional, as in the case of Russian scientists who are not allowed to belong to a world scientific community; religious, as in the isolation of the Russian Orthodox church from contact with the outside world; or national, as in Poland, Germany, and Yugo-Slavia, where National Communism clashes with loyalty to the U.S.S.R. We must not ignore the possibility that this weakness may be rectified at least in part, to keep the system alive. But while such tensions continue the Western rivals of Russia have every motive for rejecting, both in theory and in practice, the temptation to impose any sort of streamlined monotype culture upon all parts of their one world. An attempt will be made to combine political and economic unity with genuine cultural diversity.

We have been prepared for this necessary recognition of variety and complexity in a single civilization by the great

increase in historical consciousness in the last fifty years. We are conscious of a multitude of possible patterns of civilized behaviour in a way in which our fathers and grandfathers were not. Spengler and Toynbee and Christopher Dawson, books on Indian mysticism and Chinese practical wisdom, on Byzantine art and Medieval learning, the admiration and imitation of Chinese and negro art, have made us aware, in one way or another, of a plurality of cultures. Many of us are becoming aware of a plurality of Christian cultures, a collection of earthenware vessels into which the wine of the gospel has been, and is being, poured.

Our wisest leaders have warned us that the deterioration of our culture is due to a decline in the quality and coherence of our religious belief. But when we seek to retrieve the situation by a deepening of our religious life, we find that our Christianity itself is inextricably involved in our present cultural situation, and shaped by it. If the diversity of Christian cultures is an outward expression of the variety of Christian beliefs and experiences, it is no less true that differences between Christians on the religious and theological level have arisen out of cultural divergences, many of them older than Christianity itself, or at least prior to the introduction of Christianity into that particular historical setting. The Scottish character as we know it now is a product of the religious and educational history of Scotland since the Reformation; the Russian soul is the result of Orthodoxy; but the divergence between Eastern and Western Christianity arose at least in part from much older differences between Greeks and Latins. The habits of mind that seem to be characteristic of Chinese and Indian Christians have long histories behind them stretching back to the very beginnings of Indian and Chinese religion and culture.

The dream of a pure Christianity, disinfected from every alien element, Hellenistic, Roman, feudal, European or Anglo-American, an unmixed drink of Biblical theology neat, wine without a vessel, is no more than a dream, an attempt to evade the scandal of particularity, the Word who

was made flesh and dwelt among us, in a stable, in Bethlehem in Palestine. On the other hand the idea of a single, uniform Christian culture, one united, unified Christendom, is another dream and equally barren. Differences in culture must always involve some kind of difference in religion. The question at issue between the Christian churches is what kind and degree of difference is compatible with communion in one Catholic Church.

The churches of the Reformation, in their approach to this question, have always started with a search for the primitive substratum of Christianity. They have often seemed to insist that if this is found and safeguarded, the rest is human invention, and either indifferent, or corrupt. This is true not only of Protestant but of Anglo-Catholic approaches to the problem of what are Christian fundamentals. Higher criticism may narrow the field of evidence, historical research may widen it, but the principle remains that developments must be judged by the degree of their conformity to the original idea.

The Roman Catholic approach has been very different. The Roman church possesses, at least in theory, an ecclesiastical culture common to the whole body of clergy in the Latin Patriarchate, but best understood naturally in the old Latin countries, France, Italy, and Spain. In modern times, at least until very lately, churches of other rites in communion with Rome have been regarded as eccentric exceptions, amiable antiquities, who should be encouraged to preserve their liturgical customs, but educated otherwise in something very like the Latin manner. No one imagined that they had any particular relevance to contemporary problems. Roman Catholics rather boasted of the uniformity of their church in a divided world.

Of late, however, preoccupation with Russia and Eastern Europe has given a new significance to the small, active bodies of Byzantine Catholics, Ukrainian, Rumanian, Syrian, now better represented in America than in their home countries, and to other Eastern Catholic groups from the

Lebanon to Malabar.[1] Roman Catholic missionaries in India, China, and Africa have witnessed a recession of enthusiasm for European civilization, and concessions to native cultures, which in practice have always been made, are now the object of a good deal of serious and searching literature ;[2] in which questions laid temporarily to rest in the eighteenth century, by the decision of the Holy Office against the Jesuits in the matter of Chinese rites, are now revived again in a new atmosphere, with a better chance of a theological rather than a mainly political solution. Meanwhile Dr. Francis Dvornik has been reminding his fellow Roman Catholics of the early history of the Slavonic liturgy within the bounds of the Western Patriarchate, and calling attention to the struggle for the survival of something of this in Bohemia as one important element in the Hussite revolt there, out of which the German Reformation sprang.[3]

A third approach to the problem of diversity in Catholic cultures is made by those in France and Germany who are conscious of the immense gap between ecclesiastical culture, with its aristocratic and agricultural background, and the whole shape of modern industrial life. This line of thinking has been introduced to English people through such books as *France Pagan*, dealing with the life and work of the Abbé Godin and his *Mission de Paris*. All these approaches point to the emergence of a spirit in Catholicism that will acknowledge the usefulness of many expressions of one faith, not always and obviously in complete logical coherence and consistency with one another.

[1] Useful information can be gleaned from the *Eastern Churches Quarterly*, edited by Dom Bede Winslow, at St. Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate, and published by G. Coldwell, 17 Red Lion Square, W.C. 1.

[2] See two surveys in the *International Review of Missions*, no 128 (Oct. 1943) and 147 (July 1948).

[3] See his *National Churches and the Church Universal*, Dacre Press, 1944, and his larger books, *Les Slaves, Byzance et Rome au IXième Siècle*, Paris, 1926 ; *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe*, Polish Research Centre, Ltd., London, 1949 ; *The Photian Schism*, Cambridge, 1948.

Philosophical justification for this is sought and found in the Catholic Existentialism of Romano Guardini and Gabriel Marcel. To the Existentialist every philosophy of life is the response of a whole person to his whole situation. As the rigid intellectualism of Thomists some twenty years ago gives place to this new Augustinianism, directly or indirectly derived from the Danish Lutheran Kierkegaard, two French Jesuits, Père Henri de Lubac and Père Daniélou, turn to the Greek Fathers in search of answers to modern questions.

Special interest in the Greek Fathers began in the circle of specialists devoted to the Eastern churches. Their relevance to modern missionary problems is the recent discovery, not entirely unconnected with the presence in Paris, the capital of Latin culture, of a colony of Orthodox Christians preoccupied with the reconversion of Russia. The study of the Greeks has helped in the revival of interest in the interpretation of the Bible, not as a store of separate texts to be used as premisses in an argument, but as a collection of inspired liturgical literature. The flexible type of interpretation characteristic of the Greek Fathers, though common in the West as well, affords a precedent for an approach to the Bible that will take account of the complexities of its literary history, of the precise nature of each of the tales, chronicles, poems, prophecies and letters contained there.[1] The Bible is much more than a primitive source for doctrines that are to be found in a better developed condition elsewhere. "The Bible will not be fully understood until it has been translated and expounded in all the languages of the world,"[2] said a newly baptized Chinese Roman Catholic to Père de Lubac. And yet the Bible itself is an earthen vessel, infallible only in a qualified sense that needs fresh definition. In this field of enquiry into the nature of the texts and of our failures in interpretation, Roman Catholic and Protestant

[1] See the Papal encyclical *Divino afflante spiritu* (1945).

[2] Quoted by Marcus Ward in *International Review of Missions*, 147 (July, 1948), p. 254.

approaches to the problem of cultural diversity between Christians come very near to each other. Each may begin to discover the other's truth, how far away we all are from Palestine, and how limited any age's interpretation of the Bible must be without the help of other lands and ages.

The political power of the Roman Church in the Western world is very great, and probably increasing. It might be used with the highest motives simply to secure the spiritual and educational interests of Roman Catholics. If on the other hand Roman Catholics co-operate with other cultural minorities to create a civilization of many cultures, where Christians and non-Christians can live together and speak to one another without muffling their voices, where the gospel can be preached and the church criticized, they will be able to promote a movement of re-integration, not only between communities of professing Christians, but between Christendom and her lost children, the post-Christians of the Western world. The road to union lies through common labour at a long and difficult task that lies immediately before us.

GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

HUMAN RIGHTS

IN an age when we speculate anxiously on the survival of civilization, such matters as the control of atomic energy or the increase of the world food supply escape from the study and become popular topics of discussion. But these are not the only conditions of civilized survival. Among them, in a high place, stands the critical question whether anarchy can be averted and civilization saved without surrendering to dictatorship, or to an abridgment of men's rights and liberties amounting to slavery writ large. This issue, in protean forms, and in transformations sometimes so subtle as to escape popular notice, is being fought out in both eastern and western Europe and in many other lands. Christian thought and witness must bring their contribution and decision to it. It is one of those conflicts of which it must never be said to the Christian churches "We fought, and you were not there".

If the struggle is not to be waged for a phantom, it is essential that men should have no doubt of its meaning. What are the rights and freedoms which men demand? Are they permanent and unchanging in every age? What view of man's nature must provide their ultimate justification? What theological support must give to them a secure foundation? What practical steps must be taken to uphold and extend them?

The United Nations has adopted a Declaration of Human Rights. After a long preparatory process, it did so at the third session of the General Assembly in Paris, meeting in the autumn of 1948. The responsible committee held eighty-five major sessions and countless sub-committee meetings. Innumerable amendments were advanced and an avalanche of speeches, relevant or irrelevant, fell upon the unresisting delegates. At the General Assembly itself the ultimate value of the debate was not unreasonably questioned. Some thought, and have since said, that the effort was a waste of time; others regarded a declaration of rights as the starting-

point of the restoration of a new faith in the spiritual value of man. The Declaration, as it finally emerged, has been criticized as inadequate, pale, and ineffectual, a shadow of the living figure of truth and freedom. Others lay emphasis on the fact that fifty-eight governments were engaged in its discussion and claim that it had stirred up a new ferment of international thought. The Declaration has no compulsive or legal force. It is proposed that it be followed by a Covenant of Human Rights which will be binding upon those nations that adhere to it, and by the foundation of a Court of Human Rights to which the aggrieved of any nation that adheres to the Covenant may have recourse by petition with due safeguards.

Parallel with this political debate and contemporaneously, UNESCO initiated an international study, and the result has been the publication of a symposium containing contributions from philosophers and jurists of many nations.[1] The volume is based on a preliminary document issued by UNESCO itself. The essays reflect many different viewpoints from broadly Christian to positivist, and many different types of social and political experience from the western democratic to the Communist, not forgetting the structure and experience of " primitive " society.

What to-day are termed Human Rights were first won by men in their struggle against tyrants. They were defined not in the study but in the bivouac, and seized not in debate but by the sword. The debate followed. The Magna Charta, the Petition of Right and the Bill of Rights in British history are familiar examples. But the struggle is as old as the history of human societies. It is staged in its most dramatic form wherever a man has resolved to die rather than look upon the face of a tyrant. In the eighteenth century, there began in western society a process of rational preoccupation with the source and nature of right and freedom. The

[1] *Human Rights.* Comments and Interpretations. A Symposium edited by UNESCO. With an Introduction by Jacques Maritain. Allan Wingate. London. New York.

systematic discussions of the philosophers and political theorists turned to the meaning of the state, the rights of man and the general will. The development was overdue. The growth and pretensions of the nation-state rendered it inevitable. Men's rights and duties were everywhere calling for definition in the light of the claims of the state; the rights of states themselves became a subject of urgent concern, as they still are. An international doctrine of the rights of states is necessary to the further development of an effective system of international law.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the definition of the rights of man reflected classical-liberal conceptions. The freedom of the individual was to be restrained only by that of his neighbour. The statements of the period were the result of political events and bear their marks. The American constitution and Bill of Rights and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man are excellent examples. The underlying thought of such documents was similar, greatly as their particular provisions might differ. It was the function of the state to maintain the rule of law, to administer justice and secure order. It was the first freedom of the individual to be subjected to as little interference from the government as possible, in his enjoyment of the liberty of speech and press, of assembly and the owning of property. In practice this created a paradise for the predatory who were cleverer than their fellows, and probably less scrupulous. But already positive demands were emerging, and the French Declaration deals in such conceptions as the right to work, to pension, and to assistance in old age and infirmity.

To contemporary observers the declarations of the eighteenth century no doubt seemed to bear a permanent validity. Society was established on the best and surest foundations, once and for all, and right laws would create right men. This confidence was destined to be short-lived. It became apparent that the rights of social and economic existence were hardly less important than those of political existence. Pre-

sently they began to be of equal importance, while to-day there is an indifference to political rights and an enthusiasm for economic rights. The reasons are familiar and must be sought in the rapid and careless industrial development of western society. The movement received powerful support from Marxist thought and practice, and found a significant and decisive voice in the Russian revolution with its declaration, thirty years ago, of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People. For these thinkers, man's rights must be traced from his rôle in a society whose economic growth and strife is the real essence of its history. They are not rights over against the State, the ultimate " withering away " of which is the goal, but rights in relation to other men as all are regulated by the State which controls the means of production on behalf of all. For these men, freedom without bread is licence to die. This is true, but is it not true that bread without freedom is the life of a beast ?

The modern state is powerful, and no discussion of Human Rights can ignore its pretensions and claims, and, indeed, its own rights. It is here that the principal breach emerges between those who seek to find common ground from which to approach a statement of Human Rights. The debates at the United Nations and in its Commission on Human Rights revealed this quite clearly, and it constantly obtrudes into the volume published on behalf of UNESCO.

The classical-liberal tradition argues that man as an individual has rights which are before and above those of the state. They belong to his nature as man and constitute the essence of his humanity. Shorn of the realization of them and the determination to win and preserve them, he is no longer man but some other being. Possessing these rights himself, he recognizes them in his neighbours and the rights of both are in practice limited by the rights of either. Thus there is a law of man's nature that cannot be denied, and there are rights which are inseparable—" inalienable " is the customary term—from him as man. It is necessary to define and claim these rights, and the more fully and successfully

this can be done, the more natural, congenial and harmonious is the life that man can live upon earth.

There are many, particularly in the Communist states, who deny the truth and value of these assumptions and claim that it is the state, as the supreme organ of the community, that must define and concede men's rights. The state cannot recognize rights which are inherent in man, for if men claim rights that is itself evidence that a principle of Government, that is the state, is recognized and may grant them in its own discretion. It is for the state to define and to permit human rights. The need for rights and freedoms arises from man's life in community the conditions of which constantly change. There is no fixed norm for the rights a man may demand in relation to his neighbour. There can therefore be no " inalienable " rights : the state is the only and proper organ to lay down what rights and freedoms are for the community and for the individual, and having granted them it can, of course, withdraw them. Between these two approaches there are differences of utmost practical significance, and even gravity.

Neither of these viewpoints can satisfy the Christian. It is true that Christian thought owes very much to theories of natural law which are now often discredited. But distinctions must be made. Christians do not mean by natural law, either the primitive rule of nature which was little else than principles of living derived from contemplation of natural phenomena, or the individualistic law of nature derived from the urge to survival, interpreted and modified in the context of the social body. They trace their view of human rights to a natural law which is the rational creature's participation in His creator's law. God is supreme over His order of creation. He is absolute Right, absolute Justice. Neither the insight of rational man, nor the dictates of the state can supply a moral principle of right which can maintain its stand against the vigour of human instinct and sin. For this there is needed the conviction that the search to know and to do the will of God who is Right will be rewarded with a

knowledge of the right and true. Thus in the hour of Europe's tyrannies men have found hope and energy in the rediscovery of a law of nature discernible in the " unwritten laws of the Creator ", and accessible to those who seek His will.

But those who use freely such terms as " eternal ", " immutable ", when they are speaking of a God of Justice, must be very careful that they do not equate Right with privilege or with stagnation. There was a time when all men placed the right to property in the forefront of Human Rights, and none questioned that property included slaves. The circumstances that surround and affect men's lives constantly shift and change. Human instincts demand novel and unfamiliar satisfaction. New forces constantly emerge ; new horizons seem fit for conquest, and, when conquered, it seems to belong to man's rights that they should be enjoyed. Only the state, some say, can constantly adapt itself to such change, can reorder its system of law, and satisfy the social demands of the community. We have seen the fallacy of this. The state is often the worst offender and inevitably tends to maintain only those rights that stabilize its own position. On the one hand the Christian must recognize the organic and vitalistic nature of man's needs : on the other, he must constantly seek a moral principle of Right which alone can redeem Rights from the taint of cynical self-interest.

The new element in the present discussion of Human Rights is its international character. Ineffectual in important spheres as the United Nations has proved, it is at least significant that one of its early tasks has been the attempt to define a charter of Human Rights. The results certainly bear the marks of practical compromise, and reflect some of the deeper divisions of a schizophrenic world society. All this is regrettable. A Declaration of Human Rights, nobly conceived and thoroughly founded, promulgated by an international authority invested with the august dignity of continuity and respect would have been an impressive docu-

ment. But such was not to be ; and may not be in our time. It will be evident to any who glance cursorily through the UNESCO volume that there are differences between men on the very basis of Human Rights which cannot be easily bridged. But in common experience it is true that men will agree on particular projects although their general outlooks remain irreconcilable. If it were not so, such practical progress as mankind has made in the political and social order would have been indescribably slower.

The Churches have been aware of the importance of the work of the Commission on Human Rights, and the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs has been represented by a consultant, Dr. Frederick Nolde, who has participated actively in the debates. Selfish though it may seem, the Churches' Commission has concentrated very largely on Article 18 (freedom of worship and belief), but this concentration is simply owing to lack of resources. The present form of this Article 18 is due in considerable measure to the influence of the Churches, expressed through innumerable interviews, representations and committees. The approach has been based, not so much on theological assumptions, as on regular consultation with the Churches all over the world as to the exact wording which they would be prepared to accept. Freedom of worship, belief and teaching, and freedom to change belief are fundamental to all other freedoms. At least it is reasonable to argue that they are, and when the Churches themselves have ignored or restrained these freedoms they have brought the penalties of decay upon themselves. It is, perhaps, significant that in the final debate the Foreign Minister of Pakistan supported the full text of Article 18. He said :

" Islam is a missionary religion. It claims the right and freedom to persuade any man to change his faith and accept Islam. Surely and obviously, it must equally yield to other faiths the free right of conversion. There cannot be any doubt on that point. We therefore have the greatest pleasure in declaring from the

rostrum that we shall support this article as it stands, without any kind of limitation upon its operation whatsoever."

In the struggle for Human Rights, the Churches come to grips with one of the perplexities of modern society. It is a struggle that is conducted in the arena of international politics with all its ambiguities, its self-interests and compromise. But the conception of Human Rights, naked and alone, is not one which can touch the deepest chords of Christian experience. In all times it has been recognized that rights are correlative to duties, and individualistic theories of Human Rights are usually based on the Ciceronian principle that justice consists in rendering to every man his due. But the love of God and of the neighbour is not so much a right or a duty but a constraint and a response. It is not a right to love one's neighbour as oneself, it is the loving response to a divine command. The only fundamental right that the Christian demands for himself is the freedom to express this constraint in worship and action.

Because the state is impersonal and comprehensive, it can know nothing of love. In the relation of states with one another, and in those relations of men with one another which are capable of being regulated by the state, justice must be the due recognition of Human Rights. In their observance and administration the obligations of law are fulfilled. But the obligations of love are never complete: there is a sense in which they only begin when those of Right have been discharged. Love cannot forget Rights and in the modern world it must fight to secure them for all men, sometimes in circumstances of bitter tragedy and temporary defeat. But it is only in the victory that love begins its real task.

KENNETH G. GRUBB.

GOETHE

THE BICENTENARY REVIEWED

IF there is anything in George Brandes' dictum that a nation's culture is to be gauged by its attitude to Goethe —and it is one of those remarks which, however lightly one chooses to dismiss them on a first hearing, have a way of recurring to the mind—it may be well to review the course of the bicentenary celebrations of Goethe in this country. They are, of course, only part of a European, even of a world-wide, movement of piety, gratitude and hopefulness. But none of these things comes very easily to the Englishman. We are not particularly pious in remembering our own great men: the cult of the one-man museum, the carefully arranged and scrupulously preserved birthplace, does not easily take root in our soil; whoever it was that originally suggested the tripartite agreement by which Stratford-on-Avon, the Goethe House in Frankfurt and the Spinoza House at Rijnsburg regularly send each other birthday wreaths, with labels of respectful congratulations and good wishes attached, I am pretty sure it was not the English. The B.B.C. and the Goethe Festival Society between them are certainly doing their best to see that we make a worthy contribution to the European Goethe Festival—we are trying extra hard just now, to remember that we form a part of the European tradition, and it would be difficult to deny Goethe the title of Europe's greatest son—but which of our own sons have we ever celebrated, or could we imagine celebrating, in this way? As for gratitude, many educated English people are wholly unaware what it is they are supposed to be grateful for. It is far too easy to blame it all on Carlyle, who originally presented us with a thoroughly forbidding Hero, complete with all those teutonic qualities by which we are most readily, and most understandably, exasperated (and how few of them the real Goethe actually had, how delightfully he appraises the

German character from *outside* !), so that, to quote *The Times* leader when the project of an English Goethe Festival was first mooted, " when the Englishman remembers Goethe at all, it is as a very hardened, very wise, very prefectorial elder, ravaged by conflicting passions, but finally victorious, the Zeus of an almost aggressively cosy South German Olympus ". Carlyle's shockingly bad translation of *Wilhelm Meister* only confirms this impression ; but what Goethe translation does much better ? As to hopefulness, we are scarcely in the mood for hope, at least along the humanistic lines which we are given to understand the sage of Weimar has laid down for us. There have always been those who held that, so far from seeing life steadily and seeing it whole, Goethe saw precious little but himself and desired nothing but his own self-development. On the occasion of the celebration of the anniversary of his birth, one distinguished English critic murmured that Goethe was " in eclipse ", and another openly declared that " most modern men, unless they are Germans, have a positive distaste " for him ; an American critic of standing deplored the excavating of " the greatest source of non-usable ' wisdom ' the Western world has produced in the last few centuries " ; and minor but not dissimilar rumblings were audible last year.

What has the English contribution to the Goethe celebrations so far amounted to ? Honours are divided between the British Goethe Festival Society, the B.B.C. and a handful of books. The first-named body (the names of whose joint secretaries, Prof. Elizabeth Wilkinson and Wilhelm Unger, are sufficient guarantees of scholarship and enterprise) has been responsible for a series of lectures and readings, both in German and in English, suited mainly to connoisseurs. It is difficult to tell how far the Society actually organizes and sponsors, and how far it merely disseminates information about, the various events ; but whichever it does, it does very well. It is presumably unnecessary to mention in detail the innumerable talks, recitals and play productions given, or shortly to be given, on the wireless ; David

Porter's fortunately abbreviated version of that over-wordy play *Egmont* I thought pretty well done, and it was ennobled by the Beethoven music. The new *Faust* translation (every word of both parts) by Louis MacNeice, assisted by E. L. Stahl, may prove to be the English version we have been waiting for. Presumably the best of the talks will be also available in print one day; the B.B.C. have managed to attract a most distinguished company of Goethe lovers, both professional and lay, to the microphone, and some of the talks have reached a very high level indeed. Thomas Mann's much publicized address (presenting as specimens of the German genius, exhibiting "an unmistakable family likeness", none other than Luther, Goethe, and Bismarck!) I thought wrong-headed and unpleasant—the author of *Lotte in Weimar* should have done better than this. The books about Goethe have been remarkably few, though not unimportant.[1]

So far, then, the English-speaking world has not contributed anything very weighty to the already enormous bulk of Goetheana that loads the shelves of every German library (critical and biographical studies alone occupy over one

[1] I may refer the reader to *A Study of Goethe* by Barker Fairley (Oxford), a fine biographical-critical interpretation, *Goethe on Nature and Science* by Sir Charles Sherrington (Cambridge), a somewhat patronizing lecture, and the admirable special issue of *German Life and Letters*, in which expert and non-expert alike will find valuable essays. *The Goethe Year* is a bi-lingual journal appearing in twelve issues, under the editorship of Wilhelm Unger, backed by a formidable team of scholars and critics from many lands. So far only a single issue has been published, and it is perhaps a little on the portentous side, but there are fine contributions by L. L. Whyte, on the "unitary man", and by Rudolf Steiner, a much underrated exponent of Goethe, whose book on *Goethe's Conception of the World*, quite free from esotericism, remains a most reliable interpretation of the non-literary side of Goethe—and let us not forget that he gave more of his time and attention to science than to literature. The most solid book that has appeared so far is a collection of *Essays on Goethe* edited by William Rose, which is a thoroughly sound and readable *Festschrift*. The essay on Goethe's reputation in America is useful to the European reader, but that on Goethe and the book-collectors might have been omitted.

hundred pages of the British Museum catalogue—which gets a good many entries into a page). That is, perhaps, all to the good; ultimately, the only thing to do about Goethe is to get to know him, not to read about him. There are a few, a very few, critical studies of his writings which are really helpful to a purely literary appreciation, but the only finally satisfactory relationship with Goethe is not literary at all, nor philosophical, but personal. The kind of surrender that Middleton Murry has made to Shakespeare, to Blake and to Keats is what is required of us, and of course it has its dangers. (I had hoped to be able to keep the word existential out of this article; but naturally Goethe has been claimed as the earliest exponent of the view of life which Heidegger was to express fully a century later. Ortega y Gasset presents him as "the man in whom for the first time dawns a consciousness that human life is the struggle of man with his own intimate and individual destiny".) But I still think that people who merely read about Goethe will never understand him; still less will those who read only a little of him, who dip here and there and fish out a handful of "proof-texts" which they proudly, but invariably wrongly, suppose to represent his "message". (What scathing answers Goethe used to give to those who tried to pump him for "messages"—but he had himself to blame, for he was the author of a vast bulk of first-rate cracker mottoes.) No, it is no use dipping your toes into his work—nothing less than a header is sufficient. And that is perhaps why, if you must read about him, you had better read someone who has made the personal surrender, and achieved in a greater or lesser degree, the *participation mystique* of which I have spoken. That is why, for instance, Steiner's book, though admittedly partial, is so illuminating. That is why a small book by Albert Schweitzer that has recently appeared is in some ways the most important feature of the Goethe celebration.[1] It consists of two addresses and an essay,

[1] *Goethe*, by Albert Schweitzer, A. & C. Black. 6s.

which to a certain extent overlap. They are not profound, nor are they very happily translated; but they are, because they are the expression of a real and total impact of one great man upon another, immensely well worth reading. The addresses were given at Frankfurt in 1928 and 1932 respectively (when Schweitzer was being honoured by Goethe's fellow-townspeople), and the essay was first published in the latter year. "My debt to Goethe" is personal and simple to the point of naivety: Schweitzer tells how Goethe has, all his life, been his spiritual companion, and helped him to an understanding of the "elemental, homely philosophy of nature", of the necessity for joining practical work with intellectual activity, of that absolute obligation to "reverence life" before attempting to act upon it. In the second address he reminds us how for Goethe the road wound uphill all the way—and it is far too easy to assume that because his material circumstances were comfortable, everything came easily to him: on the contrary, nothing whatever did, and after *Werther* not one of his works found general approval, his plays were seldom acted, his scientific work was boycotted, he was constantly and bitterly criticized. But he never uttered a word of complaint. "With Goethe," as Schweitzer finely puts it, "a fragment of Nature enters into Literature"; and to understand that is to understand a large portion of his lyric poetry. What was Faust's error but deserting Nature, and presuming to control that of which he was himself a part? And what, incidentally, is the drama that is being played out in our own age but that same story of hybris, inevitable retribution, and the necessity of the long, hard way of repentance, restitution and atonement? Mephistopheles is always with us, and the cottage of Philemon and Baucis is burnt anew in every age. Goethe's quiet command to Man to be "noble, helpful, and good" reads complacently enough until we realize that he knew all the effort that it involved, for himself and for his fellow men, knew too the necessity (to quote his own words to Eckermann) of "the everlasting love from

on High that comes to his aid ". In the same conversation with Eckermann he explicitly avows his belief in divine grace. Fundamentally all the characters in Goethe's works are in process of purification. He has been accused of always running away ; it is precisely what he never did—he set himself to carry every guilty burden that he had incurred, to the end, and all his writings may be described as a search for the right way in which this may be done. He clearly foresaw our technical as well as our political problem : he foretold the results of the impact of machinery upon our social life, and the dangers to individual responsibility of large-scale democratic government, with uncanny accuracy. But, more important, he saw man's perennial moral problem no less clearly. He was Faust, and he learnt his lesson ; we are Faust, and he tells us earnestly that we must " renounce our allegiance to economic and social magic, unlearn the incantations with which we have been befooled, and determine, whatever the cost, to get back to a natural relationship with reality ". It is very easy to label Goethe a man of the Enlightenment, to pull our skirts nervously away from contact with his egotistic humanism. A superficial reading of him will warrant the label ; a deeper study of his life and work will reveal them as one powerful and sustained protest against the Enlightenment ; Goethe is the tireless defender (indeed, part architect and builder) of many bastions of the European cultural and spiritual tradition which Christians are now seeking to preserve against the lapping waters of surrounding barbarism. *Wilhelm Meister* is the story of purification through guilt and remorse to restitution and final atonement ; it is a Christian parable, written by a non-Christian in non-Christian terms. In *Faust*, even the theological framework is Christian, as Marshall Montgomery points out in his introduction to the World's Classics translation. The reason why this is so seldom recognized is obvious : people read as far as the death of Gretchen, and imagine that they have finished the work, when in point of fact they have read only one third of that great parable of

redemption. Why will not the critics see the words that are set down for them? Coleridge and Lamb may perhaps be forgiven for missing the point; but need G. H. Lewes have found Part 2 "an elaborate mistake", need a real Goethe lover like Matthew Arnold (who claimed to have "read through and assimilated" a thirty volume edition of Goethe's works) have described Part 1 as "the only one that counts", need Croce have dismissed the Prologue in Heaven (a "whole theodicy in twenty-eight brief lines" as it has justly been called) as "no more than a jest in a *dégagé* manner, quite out of harmony with the drama that follows"? *Faust* opens with a vision of God's power and wisdom, and it closes with a vision of His love. The theology is, certainly, not impeccably orthodox: it is Leibnizian-Christian at most. But it is patient of a scholastic interpretation, in the terms of Aquinas and Bonaventura, even of the Apocalypse. I have already quoted phrases from Goethe's description to Eckermann of Faust's salvation; it is purely catholic-evangelical. The theology of Faust is essentially the theology of the Book of Job and the medieval mysteries. Why will not Christians see in Goethe the ally that he most certainly is? His moving testament to the message of the Gospels, made eleven days before his death to Eckermann, brings him very close to them indeed. His pantheistic mysticism is one which has sheltered many pagans—but also sheltered a good many Christians of both medieval and modern times, the main difference being, perhaps, that Goethe was not content to remain aggressively ignorant of the physical constitution of the world through which God revealed His glory to the five senses of Man. *Deus sive Natura* he was to Goethe as to Spinoza. I am open to correction, but I should have thought that Paul's address to the men of Athens gave this God-Nature mysticism the right of citizenship in the Christian community. Goethe's own *Stirb und werde*[1] is surely reminiscent of a saying that one has heard before. . . .

REGINALD SNELL.

[1] Perhaps *grow by dying* is the nearest our language will get to this untranslatable and fundamental Goethean precept.

THE CHRISTIAN FRONTIER

THE Christian Frontier is an idea. The Christian Frontier Council is a group of men and women who are seeking together to understand what the Frontier idea entails, and in their various spheres of responsibility to act in the light of this understanding. The Frontier Council claims no monopoly in the frontier idea, but desires to see it understood and worked out as widely as possible and by as many groups of people as possible.

The Frontier Idea

All men are called to glorify and obey God and to serve the neighbour. Three areas of obedience to God and of service to the neighbour can be usefully distinguished, though they are not to be separated from one another.

First, there is a man's personal and private relation to God, about which no one but God himself can fully know or finally judge, but which all the same impalpably affects a man's relation to his neighbours.

Secondly, there is the relationship into which a man is brought as a member of the Church, the universal community of believers in Christ with its embodiment in local and national churches, and there are the duties which arise directly out of that relationship. This may be called the area of ecclesiastical obedience.

Thirdly, there is a man's duty to obey God and serve the neighbour in all the social groups and natural relationships in which by God's ordinance and the necessities of historical existence he finds himself. It is this third area with which the Christian Frontier is specially concerned and in which the frontier idea arises. It includes international, national and local politics, industry, agriculture, commerce, finance, scientific research, the arts, culture, education, the family, and the professions. In all these spheres men are called to glorify and obey God, and to serve their neighbours.

Christian men are bound to obey God's Law for human life, to which the Old and New Testaments bear witness. But it is not the office of the Church to tell men precisely how they ought to think and act in their various spheres of responsibility, if by the Church is meant the ecclesiastical institution, ecclesiastical assemblies or the ordained ministry. There is no universal program of action which can be directly deduced from the Bible or from the dogmatic and moral teaching of the Church. The Law of God is a guide to the permanent will of God, but it is not a code of legislation nor a static system of conduct. It leads not to edicts but to insight. The Holy Spirit shows men the will of God now, when they reckon honestly and faithfully with the existing facts with which they have to deal and with the existing state of affairs in which they have to act. Christian action means action by Christian men who respond to God's call in the encounters of life. The discovery of the right way to respond to God's call in those spheres, which occupy by far the largest part of a layman's life and responsibility, is not only of the utmost importance, but often also of very great difficulty. It is not simple or easy at any time ; in the present period it is peculiarly complicated and exacting, since nearly all the forms of social life are undergoing rapid and far-reaching change, and new problems, often highly technical in character, are everywhere requiring to be solved.

It is not for the Church as such to solve these problems or to direct its lay members in the performance of their social responsibilities. Whatever the Church may have attempted to do in the past, whatever its success or failure in previous ages in overruling the whole of social life, it is now no longer in a position to make the attempt, and in no foreseeable future will it be possible or desirable for the attempt to be made again. The Church should, however, incite and encourage its lay members to work out these problems for themselves in the light both of the Christian understanding of the fundamental nature of man and society, and of an

expert understanding of the present facts and changing conditions in each sphere where decisions have to be taken.

Without committing or being controlled by ecclesiastical authority, Christian men and women are free to co-operate with one another, and with others who do not share their faith, in exploring the various fields of social responsibility and action, in seeking illumination on the particular problems by which they are severally faced, and in making available to a wider public whatever insight comes to them. By the frontier idea is meant recognition of the fact that there is this frontier between theology (in the sense of Christian dogma) and the multifarious spheres in which men have to act, or between the Church as an ecclesiastical institution and the tasks in which Christians have to obey God without direct ecclesiastical guidance. The perception that this frontier area exists and that it must be explored by fresh methods is sufficiently new to warrant the invention of this new name.

The Christian Frontier is a common concern of all Christians, to whatever church they belong or however loosely they are attached to any church at all. The problems that arise on the Christian Frontier are much the same for Catholics and Protestants, or for Christians of the East and of the West. If there are differences of approach and of conclusion, they cut across the lines of ecclesiastical difference. The Christian Frontier is therefore a place where close co-operation is possible on an ecumenical basis, and the frontier idea is in fact playing an important part in the development of the Ecumenical Movement.

The Christian Frontier Council

The Christian Frontier Council is a fellowship of about thirty men and women who occupy responsible positions in public life, though they are members of the Council only in their private capacity. The Council was formed in 1942, with the approval of the leaders of the Church of England, the Church of Scotland and the Free Churches. It reports

periodically to the British Council of Churches, but is not part of its organization and is completely free in the means by which it seeks to attain its ends. The purpose of the Council is to serve as a focus for the exploration of the frontier idea in Great Britain, and to provide guidance and help where these are wanted. It does not seek to add another nation-wide organization to the many already in existence or to form new groups under its own auspices all over the country. The activities which it seeks to promote and assist can best be undertaken by existing organizations or by groups that are independently formed for the purpose. The Council regards its own function as being to explore new problems, to unravel tangled and knotty questions, to test fresh methods, to accumulate experience, and in any published results to maintain as high a level as possible, since nothing short of this will be of real value to others. The membership of the Council is periodically renewed by the retirement of some members and the election of new ones.

The activities of the Council so far fall into three main categories.

First, it holds a long evening meeting once a month in London, at which questions of public interest are considered, and during which there is a time of worship. In addition to members of the Council, visitors who have special knowledge of the subject under consideration are invited to take part in the discussion. The attendance at these meetings has to be kept small; there cannot be effective interchange of thought in a large gathering. The most immediate result of such discussion is in the minds of those who take part in it, and since both members of the Council and visitors invited to particular meetings occupy positions of responsibility in various spheres the clarifying of thought and the deepening of understanding often result in effective action.

Secondly, under the auspices of the Council and assisted by its officers, several specialist groups have been formed to work intensively and continuously at particular subjects. More of these groups might have been formed if a larger

staff and ampler resources had been available. No group is started unless there is a prospect that enough solid work can be done to make it really worth while, and unless the persons in the group are thoroughly competent in the particular field of inquiry.

Thirdly, the Council has taken opportunities of publishing the results of its work and the conclusions of the groups which it has sponsored. Until the summer of 1949 it was responsible for the publication of *The Christian News-Letter*, which was edited first by Dr J. H. Oldham and then by Dr Kathleen Bliss, who were at the same time executive officers of the Council. Much of the material that was discussed at meetings of the Frontier Council found its way into the pages of the *C.N-L.*, as also did papers and reports prepared by Frontier groups. By this means the thinking that was done by the Council and its associated groups has had a growing influence, and has also been followed with keen interest in other countries. The publication of the *C.N-L.* had to be stopped in July, 1949, on account of staffing difficulties which were at the time insurmountable. It has since been found possible to start in its place *The Frontier*, which is a monthly journal, edited by Mr Philip Mairet and Dr Alec Vidler, and published by Blackwell.

Frontier discussions have also led to the publication of books. *The Crisis in the University* by Sir Walter Moberly was published under the auspices of the Council. It was the outcome of concerted thinking by a group of university teachers and administrators that was jointly sponsored by the Council and the Student Christian Movement. *The Doctor's Profession* was also published under the Council's auspices; this is an inquiry into medical problems and is the fruit of discussions by a Frontier group of doctors, who were assisted by the Rev. Daniel Jenkins, an officer of the Council. The preparation of other books is either in hand or under consideration.

Frontier thinking also, of course, finds its way into the national journals and periodicals and over the radio through

the contributions of members of the Council and others.

Members of the Christian Frontier Council

Edwin Barker
Robert Birley, C.M.G.
Kathleen Bliss
T. S. R. Boase
Henry Brooke
H. C. Dent
L. J. Edwards, O.B.E., M.P.
Letitia Fairfield, C.B.E.
Sir Arthur fforde
Eric Fletcher, M.P.
Sir Wilfrid Garrett
George Goyder
K. G. Grubb, C.M.G.
T. M. Heron
Kenneth Johnstone
H. G. Judd, C.B.E.
Philip Mairet
Violet Markham, C.H., J.P.
Sir John Maud, K.C.B., C.B.E.
Sir Walter Moberly, K.C.B., G.B.E., D.S.O.
H. C. B. Mynors
J. H. Oldham
Marjorie Reeves
Clifton Robbins
John Rodgers
Edna Roe
Basil Smallpeice
W. G. Symons
Lord Wakehurst, K.C.M.G.
Barbara Ward

Officers of the Council

A. R. Vidler
Isabel Rattray

The office of the Council is at 8 The Cloisters, Windsor Castle, Berks.

Members of the Council and its executive officers have always been closely associated with the Ecumenical Movement, and contact is maintained with groups of lay people who are engaged in various kinds of frontier activity in other countries. The Council is represented on a liaison committee of national laymen's groups and institutes which meets periodically at the Ecumenical Institute at the Château de Bossey in Switzerland. Likewise contact is, so far as possible, maintained with other groups and movements in Britain which are engaged in frontier activities.

The development of the work of the Council has, however, always been severely restricted by shortage of staff, and its executive officers are at present reduced to a bare minimum. There is still no limit to what might be attempted if ampler financial resources and a replenished staff were available. The Council does not seek to advertise itself, or to make claims which it is not in a position to fulfil. It may be described as an experiment in the possibilities of friendship, in which, through free intercourse, minds stimulate, quicken and enrich one another.

LETTER FROM SOUTH INDIA

I THOUGHT some of you might be interested in an account of the situation between Christianity and Communism in this part of the world, the western part of Hyderabad State. I think it is unusual, perhaps unique. Communism is a recent importation here; it grew up only during the troubled period between the departure of the British and the entry of Indian Dominion Troops just a year ago, when this State was increasingly dominated by the gang of Muslim extremists called the Razzackars. At that time the Communists bore the brunt of the fighting against these Razzackars, and soon got a grip on the remoter areas in the two districts of Nalgonda and Warangal; social injustice and oppressive landlordism are specially rife in these parts, so they had a ready field waiting for them. Also there is plenty of forest and hill country in these places, and roads are very rare throughout the State, so guerilla warfare was a comparatively easy matter.

When the Indian troops came in, the Communists immediately went into opposition and shot at Congress workers and Congress-supported landlords with great zest. For a period of three months after the entry of Indian troops Communists were in virtual control of large areas of these two districts. Now they have been driven out of the larger villages and areas round the railway, but are still a power very much to be reckoned with in the more remote areas of these two districts, though nowhere else in the State, I believe. Murders of landlords and Congress sympathizers are still fairly frequent, and the technique of the

Indian Military police against them is very largely ineffective. They nearly always arrive well after the Communist outrage has taken place and arrest, not the authors of the crime, who are usually miles away by that time, but anyone on the spot who seems to them the sort of person who might have had something to do with the outrage. Suspects are kept in jail indefinitely without being charged or tried.

In this situation our Christians, who are 99 per cent villagers, are implicated with the rest. During the Razzackar régime Christians made valiant efforts to be neutral, and were remarkably successful; but after the entry of Indian troops some of them at least became too much allied with the Communists. The Communists had on the whole taken a friendly attitude towards the Christians, regarding them as fellow-travellers (e.g. when they burnt the station here during the interregnum caused by the withdrawal of Nizam's troops as the Indians were approaching, the Communists were careful not to touch our Compound, only a hundred yards from the station). Some of the Communist leaders are ex-Christians. This might have had no serious consequences, except that our local parish priest, who is a Tamil missionary in charge of the whole Tamil Mission that founded Dornakal, himself became badly compromised with the local Communists. He is a man of genuine idealism and a really keen evangelist, who hated the gross social injustice that he saw all round him, and, like many leftwingers before the war, believed that, as the Communists also professed to be out for social justice, co-operation with them was justified. Unfortunately, whereas in pre-war Britain co-operation with Communists meant nothing much more than co-operation with people who organized strikes, here it meant co-operation with people who organized murders. Finally our parish priest actually gave shelter in this compound for one night, *ignorante episcopo*, to a Communist leader who was on the run, and who was subsequently arrested in Madras. When the Military Government learned this, they asked that this priest should leave the State immediately (they might with perfect justice have arrested him) and sent the word round that all Christians in this district were to be considered suspects. The consequence of this is that a good many of our Christians were arrested, including two Telugu priests and a theological student who was studying in our Divinity School here. I am fairly confident that there was no real evidence against them, but

nothing could be done at the time. However, after about three months in prison, without charge or trial, one priest and the student have been released on bail. I have questioned the student about conditions in the jail where he was. He says there were twenty-six Christians with him; they were allowed to be together and held regular morning and evening prayers. They were not treated as criminals, and the jail superintendent, a Muslim, was a good fellow. The Communists who were in with them tried to organize a strike against the food (unjustified, he said), but the Christians refused to take part in it, and earned the commendation of the superintendent. There is a rumour that all these Christians are to be released soon, but rumours are unusually untrustworthy in India.

Against this our ideological counter offensive has been almost nil. It 's not much use distributing pamphlets round the villages as 80 per cent of our Christians are illiterate. The Christian Literature Society has brought out a pamphlet on the principles of Communism which is as good as anything I've seen anywhere, but it is useless to anyone below university standard. Some months ago we had a very opportune visit from Dr. Sherwood Eddy; his theology may be somewhat old-fashioned, but he does know Russia from personal experience, and in a most interesting meeting he convinced our students, I think, that playing with Communism is playing with fire. Immediate drastic agrarian reform and a much less corrupt local administration would, I feel sure, remove Communism from these two districts quickly, but, though the people at the head of the Military Government here seem men of genuine goodwill, I'm afraid both these objectives are beyond them. The great appeal of Communism is that it offers equality and freedom to a people that is just beginning to be conscious of the injustice it is suffering. Our local Communists are half bandits, but they have some leaders who are well-trained in Communist doctrine. Politically, there is no question of "Christianity or Communism" in South India anyway; Christianity hardly counts in the game of politics, but ideologically it 's not an entirely misleading slogan. Christianity really is something of a driving force here; it *does* make a difference to be a Christian. The Congress Party seems entirely to have lost any sense of ideology or driving force now that independence is achieved and Gandhi dead.

ANTHONY HANSON.